

WASHINGTON, DC – Congressman Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) led a bipartisan letter sent today to President Bush from Washington-area House members calling for parity in the 2008 pay adjustments for both military and civilian federal employees. Pay parity is a long-standing bipartisan-supported principle that ensures the pay adjustments for the armed services and civilian workforce are fair, equal, and duly compensate federal employees for their dedicated service to the nation.

The letter states: As members of Congress representing tens of thousands of federal civilian employees and military personnel, we are writing to ask that you embrace the principle of pay parity for members of the armed services and the civilian Federal workforce in your fiscal year 2008 budget proposal that you will shortly be sending to Congress.

Mr. Hoyer issued a separate statement calling for a 2008 adjustment that takes into account the modest pay adjustment federal employees received last year of 2.2 percent - an amount that represents the lowest increase in nearly 20 years.

“As a long-time supporter of military-civilian worker pay parity, I was very disappointed by last year’s inadequate wage adjustment of just 2.2 percent - the smallest increase in nearly 20 years,” stated Hoyer. “I would hope the President plans to include in his Fiscal Year 2008 budget an increase that will make up for last year's unacceptably low adjustment and recognizes how vital the federal workforce is in protecting and advancing our nation's interests.”

In addition to Rep. Hoyer, the nine other Washington-area members who signed the letter are Reps. Elijah E. Cummings (D-Md.), C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.), John Sarbanes (D-Md.), Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), Albert R. Wynn (D-Md.), Thomas M. Davis III (R-Va.), James P. Moran Jr. (D-Va.), and Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.), and Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.).

*The full text of the letter is below.*

January 22, 2007

The Honorable George W. Bush

The White House

Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As members of Congress representing tens of thousands of federal civilian employees and military personnel, we are writing to ask that you embrace the principle of pay parity for members of the armed services and the civilian Federal workforce in your fiscal year 2008 budget proposal that you will shortly be sending to Congress.

Pay parity is not a new concept. Historically, Congress has expressed strong bipartisan support for parity in pay adjustments between our military and federal civilian sectors, due to the essential service military and civilian employees provide to our nation and the vast wage gap that exists between public and private sector wages.

In nearly every year during the past two decades, there have been equal adjustments in the compensation of members of the uniformed services and the compensation of civilian employees of the United States as a means under the General Schedule system to help achieve pay comparability between the public and private sector.

We cannot express strongly enough the importance of continuing the tradition of pay parity between military and civilian employees in the coming fiscal year. As we fight the war on terrorism at home and abroad, both the armed services and the federal civilian workforce are integral to fulfilling the role of government for the American people. An equal pay adjustment in 2008 will send the important message that the services civilians and military personnel provide to America every day are highly valued. In addition, the federal government is facing a "human capital crisis," with many of our most experienced employees poised to retire. It is critical that we be able to recruit and retain quality employees in the future.

Thanking you and with kindest personal regards, we are

Sincerely,

Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD.)

Rep. Elijah E. Cummings (D-Md.),

Rep. C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.)

Rep. John Sarbanes (D-Md.)

Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.)

Rep. Albert R. Wynn (D-Md.)

Rep. Thomas M. Davis III (R-Va.)

Rep. James P. Moran Jr. (D-Va.)

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